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Education, Energy, and the  
Environment Committee  
Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal  
Service Program Workgroup



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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 429**  
**Maryland Energy Administration – Study on Land – Based Wind Energy**  
Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
February 19, 2026

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB 429, Maryland Energy Administration – Study on Land-Based Wind Energy. SB 429 requires the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to evaluate the potential for land-based wind energy generation in Maryland, including identifying areas with suitable wind resources. The study also directs MEA to examine mitigation strategies used elsewhere to address potential conflicts between wind turbines and critical technologies, such as radar and military operations. MEA is required to report its findings and recommendations, providing a data-driven planning tool and structured foundation for any future consideration of land-based wind projects.

By identifying feasible areas for wind development and evaluating proven mitigation strategies, the study enables the State to make informed, deliberate decisions. This early, structured analysis avoids late-stage conflicts, protects communities, and preserves ratepayer resources.

Onshore wind is among the most affordable sources of electricity available today. According to Our World in Data, the levelized cost of energy for constructing a new gas plant is approximately \$74 per megawatt-hour, while the cost for a new land-based wind turbine is about \$49 per megawatt-hour. In other words, it is roughly 50 percent more expensive to build a new gas plant than a new land-based wind project.

Land-based wind is already being developed in Western Maryland, where several projects total approximately 245 megawatts of capacity. In contrast, on Maryland's Eastern Shore, no developers are even considering new land-based wind projects. This is not due to a lack of wind resources, but rather a policy signal the state sent 13 years ago indicating that land-based wind development was not welcome in that region.

At that time, proposed projects were located near Naval Air Station Patuxent River (PAX), and the military raised concerns that wind turbines could interfere with the ADAMS radar system

used at the base. The Navy requested a 46-mile exclusion radius around the installation, which effectively eliminated all areas with wind speeds high enough to be commercially viable. Wind turbine technology has advanced significantly, and modern turbines are far more efficient than earlier models. As a result, economically viable wind projects on the Atlantic side of the Eastern Shore are now possible, well outside the previously requested 46-mile radius and far from PAX.

Wind energy is also far more common today, and workable mitigation strategies now exist. For example, PAX already has an agreement with Dominion Energy under which the base may request temporary turbine shutdowns for a limited number of hours each year to avoid radar interference. This demonstrates that coexistence is possible, and similar agreements could be explored for land-based wind projects east of Salisbury.

The state's energy needs have also changed dramatically. Thirteen years ago, energy demand was flat. Today, capacity prices in the PJM Interconnection market are extremely high, and Marylanders are feeling the impact in their monthly energy bills. If Maryland has access to a clean, affordable, and readily deployable energy resource, we should be evaluating and pursuing it.

SB 429 simply requires the Maryland Energy Administration to analyze how much electricity could be generated from land-based wind in Maryland. Sound policy decisions require good data, and at present, the state lacks a clear understanding of this resource's potential. The legislation originally included an analysis of how land-based wind and ADAMS radar systems have coexisted elsewhere; however, it has since been determined that PAX hosts the only ADAMS radar system in the country, and an amendment is being offered to remove that provision.

While it may technically be possible for a wind developer to build on the Eastern Shore today, no companies are exploring the option because of the message sent by the General Assembly more than a decade ago. SB 429 demonstrates that Maryland is taking a fresh, data-driven approach to land-based wind and encourages developers to re-evaluate the Eastern Shore for potential projects. Though a study bill, it sends a meaningful message and supports efforts to expand supply and lower electricity costs for Maryland households and businesses.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 429.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin F. Brooks".

Benjamin Brooks